

RFP 1406-04-06-RP-44091
AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL—THE NATIONAL PARKS AND FEDERAL RECREATIONAL
LANDS PASS
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Question:** Is the vendor, or any subcontractor, precluded from acting as a 3rd party seller of passes? For example, if the vendor or subcontractor has websites or other distribution methods that already exist or are built in the future but not specifically for the fulfillment of the terms of this contract, can they use these as 3rd party pass sales “locations” under a 3rd party sales agreement?

Answer: No. Third party vendors will be subject to guidelines that will be established to manage third party agreements. The number and types of agreements will be determined by the Government as deemed appropriate and cost effective for the program as a whole. The contractor would not receive preference over other applicants.

2. **Question:** Certain sections include statements to the effect of “the vendor must provide” in regards to hang tags, collateral and other printed items. Should this be interpreted as the vendor must procure these items through the GPO? If so, should those printing costs be treated the same as printing costs for passes: e.g. not included in the contractor response?

Answer: Yes.

3. **Question:** Please define what types of bank cards must be accepted for payment online.

Answer: Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover.

4. **Question:** Section e.7: What is the key foreign national consumer base?

Answer: In addition to ensuring that customer service is provided in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Limited English Proficiency requirements, customer service shall be able to serve the key foreign national consumer base, which includes but may not be limited to speakers of Spanish, French, Japanese, and German.

5. **Question:** Section f.1, 2: Under what situation would the COTR/Government not approve a party for participation with the vendor in third party sales relationship?

Answer: Guidelines for the number and types of third party sales agreement will be established so that the Government can market a positive image for the program and sell the pass cost effectively. The Government may choose to limit the number and types of third party sales agreements if overhead and administration is not considered cost effective. Third party sales partners will be reviewed to ensure the following:

- **Organizations must not be in litigation with any DOI or USDA agency;**

- **Organizations must properly reflect and align themselves with the mission of the public land management agencies including promoting appropriate and responsible behavior in public land areas;**
- **Organizations must encourage public support and preservation of public lands;**
- **Organizations will not be allowed to do product endorsement in marketing, issuing or selling of the pass.**

6. **Question:** How many email customer service contacts have been received by month, each year for the past few years?

Answer: 20-50 emails on average per day (higher volume May to August). The questions vary as to the content of the emails.

7. **Question:** Please clarify the significance of the Minimum and Maximum quantities provided in the CLIN worksheet. Are respondents expected to submit one single price for CLIN 3, with the min and max data merely being informational, or are we supposed to put prices for the first 200K, then for over 200K to 600K, using breakpoint pricing. If so, which is the breakpoint? The Maximum? Are there two breakpoints?

Answer: Pricing must be provided for each CLIN based on the minimum quantity and the maximum quantity.

8. Telephone Service CLIN: It is very unusual for services of this sort to be billed as a fixed rate per month when the service to be provided is the answering of individual calls resulting in the sales of individual passes. Without any data, it's not clear how a potential vendor would price this service. If the vendor succeeds in increasing awareness of the pass, then telephone sales will grow, causing the vendor to lose money as more operators are hired. If there is little awareness, which is the opposite of what the Government wants, then the contractor will make more money from this CLIN as it is currently structured.

a. Question: What must the Telephone Service CLIN (CLIN 10, 20, etc) include? How many calls per month and what average length of call should be used in calculating this CLIN?

Answer: Data on number of call center sales is shown in Attachment B of the Statement of Work on Page 9. Reference Attachment I – Call Center Volumes 2005 attached to the Questions and Answers for additional data.

b. Question: Will the Government change the CLIN for telephone pass sales to align with contractor costs by making it PER PASS SOLD? This will ensure that the contractor seeks to increase pass sales rather than reduce them so as to make an unreasonable profit on the phone channel, if it is exercised as an option.

Answer: No.

9. CLIN structure and the impact on incentives to increase sales:

a. Question: Is revenue enhancement an evaluation criterion for respondents?

Answer: No.

b. Question: Will the Government make clear in the evaluation criteria that, similar to the stated goals of the project, increasing overall pass sales is a major evaluation criterion, including especially both internet and 3rd party sales?

Answer: Increasing overall pass sales is not an evaluation criterion for vendor proposals. The evaluation criteria are focused on providing the service requirements as stated in the RFP. Please refer to the evaluation criteria as stated.

c. Question: Will the Government modify the CLINs so that each pass which can be sold individually has a separate CLIN for the individually sold, personalized passes, for which the fulfillment process is entirely different than that of bulk passes delivered to federal sites or 3rd parties?

Answer: No, the Government will not alter the CLIN structure. The Government is seeking a single unit price for each pass type. The Government views the CLIN structure published in the RFP as appropriate in terms of providing incentives for potential vendors to provide cost effective solutions.

d. Question: Will the Government split out the 3rd party pass sales as well with separate CLINs, enabling the bidder to provide themselves with a greater incentive to increase the sale of passes through 3rd parties? Making this change would serve to increase overall federal revenue, since 3rd party sales does have a significant additional cost of business development, and contractors should be incented to incur this cost so that 3rd party sales will grow significantly.

Answer: No. Guidelines for the number and types of third party sales agreements will be established so that the Government can market a positive image for the program and sell the pass cost effectively.

10. **Question:** Who is the Government's current payment processor? (Credit Card, other)

Answer: The current processor is Bank of America. The Department of Treasury is currently in the process of soliciting a new contract for these services and the provider has not been selected as of this date. Financial operations will be handled through the National Park Service's Accounting Operations Center.

11. **Question:** How does the Government intend to have expiry dates shown on cards that are sold at Government sites?

Answer: The Annual Pass and Volunteer Pass will not have a single date or month of expiration, but rather will be valid for a period of time following sale or issuance of the Pass. Therefore, the Pass shall have the capability of being validated such that fee collectors can verify that the Pass is valid. In the past, the National Park Service punched a hole in each National Parks Pass to indicate when the Pass would expire. The new Passes will likely use a similar validation method.

12. **Question:** Can shipments to Government sites be sent by U.S. mail, or must they be sent through a service that provides shipment history and delivery confirmation?

Answer: Passes are accountable property. The contractor must be able to track and account for all passes including those shipped to Federal recreation sites.

13. **Question:** Will there be another opportunity to ask questions if selected for Phase 2?

Answer: No, there will be no further question and answer period.

14. **Question:** Is there an incumbent for this project?

Answer: No.

15. **Question:** If the GPO is printing the cards will production of cards have to be priced in Phase 2?

Answer: No. The Government will supply the printing cost information.

16. **Question:** Does the GPO have the capability to shrink wrap cards or will the contractor have to provide this service? Will this have to be priced in Phase 2?

Answer: GPO has this capability. The contractor may choose to provide this service or the contractor may choose to arrange to have the GPO do this before shipment. Costs associated with these activities are part of fulfillment (see "Instructions to Offerors – Commercial Items").

- **GPO will require from the printer that bulk passes be packaged in bundles of sequentially numbered series of 50 passes per package. These are for shipment to federal recreation sites.**
- **GPO has the capability to pre-package passes with collateral materials such as hangtags, brochures, and decals (or combinations of these materials). The contractor may use these services from GPO or may perform these duties in-house.**
- **For any third party sales arrangements that require special packaging, the cost should be negotiated in the third party sales agreement individually with third party vendors.**

17. **Question:** Does the GPO have the capability to produce rear view mirror hangers or will the contractor have to produce and price?

Answer: GPO will produce the hangtags.

18. **Question:** Are Offerors permitted to contact the GPO POC with questions prior to award?

Answer: Yes, Offerors are permitted to contact the GPO POC listed on Page 3 of the Statement of work during proposal preparation or any other pertinent time.

19. **Question:** Does the Government anticipate that the GPO will print cards and collateral materials and ship in bulk for the contractor to:

a. Insert cards in mailing pieces?

Answer: Passes shipped in bulk to federal recreation sites do not need to be packaged with collateral materials. Passes and collateral materials can be shipped separately in bulk. The quantity of passes ordered may or may not coincide with quantities of collateral materials ordered at a particular recreation site.

b. Shrink wrap and reship to third parties?

Answer: See answer for question #16. The contractor will be responsible for the accountability of passes no matter which method is chosen.

c. Will the contractor be required to encode and personalize cards?

Answer: The cards will be encoded by the printer. The contractor will be responsible for personalizing the cards either through the printer or through some other means.

20. **Question:** Does the Government have a list of required languages that shall be supported?

Answer: In addition to ensuring that customer service is provided in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Limited English Proficiency requirements, customer service shall be able to serve the key foreign national consumer base, which includes but may not be limited to speakers of Spanish, French, Japanese, and German.

21. **Question:** Can the Government provide an example list of existing third party sellers of the Pass?

Answer: Examples of existing third party vendors include Congressionally Authorized Foundations, major national retailers and service organizations, local retailers and service providers, and federal recreation cooperating partners.

22. Question: Does the Government have an accounting/tracking system in mind or a preference?

Answer: No.

23. Question: The RFP states that Marketing Strategies will be dynamic in nature and adjusted as trends and opportunities change. What trends and opportunities does the Government expect to occur that will affect a proposed marketing strategy?

Answer: The Government will evaluate marketing needs and costs throughout the life of the program.

24. Question: The RFP states that the contractor is to coordinate management of third party vendor relationships with the three Foundations and the Government, and that the contractor is to be proactive in recommending improvements to both marketing and collateral material. 1) Are there any legal constraints or other types of barriers that prohibit full partnership with the Congressionally Authorized Foundations or for-profit corporate entities? For example, many of the Congressionally Authorized Foundations have partnerships with beverage or oil companies. 2) Are there restrictions for DOI to establish direct partnerships with these organizations? 3) Will the contractor need to price out Advertising in Phase II as part of its marketing strategies?

Answer:

1) Generally, vendors may enter into relationships with other entities as they find most appropriate to meet the requirements of the solicitation. See Statement of Work, Pages 4 and 17. Certain restrictions apply to the use of government logos by non-government entities and to corporate or commercial advertising or trademarks in connection with public lands. For example:

- (a) The corporate campaign must generate a clear benefit for the public lands and be consistent with applicable laws, regulations and policies;**
- (b) Marketing or advertising activities may not state or imply an endorsement by the government of any business, product, service or enterprise;**
- (c) Advertising involving the promotion of specific brands, products, services or enterprises of a corporate partner or associated entity may not be conducted within federal recreational land areas.**
- (d) Departmental and agency logos, employees, or any part of the federal land management uniforms may not be featured in any advertisement that promotes a corporate brand, service, product, or enterprise.**
Specific proposed relationships with Congressional Foundations and/or for profit entities, including any proposed relationships involving the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

2) The three Congressionally Authorized Foundations were established to further the mission of their respective agencies. The agencies have numerous partnerships with these organizations which are generally defined in MOAs.

3) Advertising is considered under Marketing Services which shall be priced on a FFP Hourly Rate as stated in the RFP. The Government will further define its marketing needs in Statements of Work at the Task Order level when the Government has a requirement.

25. Question: The RFP states that the contractor shall be responsible for ensuring that all printing, including the new pass and collateral material, is completed by the Government Printing Office (GPO). Will the Government (GPO) furnish production of marketing and educational materials or is the contractor going to furnish the materials?

Answer: GPO is responsible for all printing and production. Marketing will be handled through Task Orders as directed by the Government. Task Orders may stipulate that certain printing orders be procured through GPO.

26. Question: Key Personnel: Please advise what personnel that shall be designated as "key."

Answer: The contractor should provide a list of individuals who will be responsible for managing and administering the program. It is up to individual contractors to determine what their needs will be for project management. Key personnel are those personnel who are essential for accomplishing the work to be performed.

27. Question: The RFP states that analysis of potential technological and customer service enhancements will be handled through a separate acquisition. Will the winning contractor for this RFP be precluded from bidding on the technological and customer service enhancements if they are handled in a separate acquisition?

Answer: No, being awarded the present contract does not preclude an organization from bidding on a future solicitation for technological and customer service enhancements.

28. Question: Is the cost of cards and collateral materials production by the GPO outside the scope of pricing by the contractor?

Answer: Yes.

29. Question: Does the Government require a specific date of expiration or a month of expiration (like a vehicle registration)?

Answer: Passes that expire include the Annual Pass (including the open-top vehicle solution) and the Volunteer Pass. These passes shall not have a single date or month of expiration, but rather will be valid for a period of time following sale of the pass. Therefore, these pass types shall have the capability of being validated such that fee collectors can verify that the pass is valid. In the past, the National Park Service

punched a hole in each National Parks Pass to indicate when the pass would expire. The new passes will likely use a similar validation method.

30. **Question:** The RFP states that shipping and handling costs shall not be charged to individuals or Federal recreation sites receiving Volunteer Passes. Does the contractor have to include this shipping in its contract?

Answer: Yes. See table on page 9 of Statement of Work. The contractor shall include shipping and handling costs in the unit price for volunteer passes.

31. **Question:** How does the Government intend to phase out existing cards and phase in the new card?

Answer: Existing cards will no longer be sold or distributed once the new passes that replace them become available for sale. Holders of passes that are being phased out will be able to use their passes as long as they remain valid.

32. **Question:** The Proposal Instructions (pages 126-128 of the RFP.pdf file) under Tab 4 of Phase I request recent past performance information to include contracts, subcontracts and grants. Are these the three categories that will address related experience?

Answer: Past performance and previous experience are two separate items. Previous experience is the extent to which you have undertaken similar tasks and past performance indicates the quality of the work of those tasks.

33. **Question:** Should previous experience or qualifications in response to Phase 1 only address items in Phase 1? Will we have an opportunity in Phase 2 to provide additional previous experience or qualifications related to the Phase 2 response?

Answer: The evaluation criteria in Phase 1 are for Phase 1 only and the results from Phase 1 will be carried over to Phase 2. The evaluation criteria in Phase 2 are for Phase 2 only.

34. **Question:** Are Offerors required to meet the small business subcontracting targets in the RFP? Do optional CLIN subcontracting components qualify toward the targets?

Answer: Offerors' subcontracting plans should address their approach for achieving the specified goals. For example, approaches for targeting small business, woman-owned, and all other subcontracting goals. The approach must address the requirements that will be fulfilled by subcontracting.

All optional CLINS, option periods and award terms are a part of the subcontracting goals.

35. **Question:** Call centers are an optional sales channel, why?

Answer: Call Center operations have not proven to be cost effective in the past. If customer demand indicates that call center services are needed, the Government may choose to exercise this option.

36. **Question:** The RFP calls for development of "portlets" for partner sites, can you describe the level of functionality required on the portlets?

Answer: For the National Parks Pass program, a number of vendors have worked with the National Park Foundation to develop what are sometimes referred to as "co-branded" websites. If an individual is on a partner website and clicks on a link to purchase a pass, they are taken to the official Government website for pass sales. The look and feel of the page shall be identical to the official pass sales page except that it will have the partner's logo included on the page as an identifier.

37. **Question:** The RFP calls for electronic acceptance of checks, money orders and travelers checks. Does pay.gov now accept ACH? Travelers checks and Money orders can not be accepted electronically and need to be manually processed, was that the intention?

Answer: Yes, pay.gov does accept ACH (see <https://www.pay.gov/paygov/overview.html>). Money orders and travelers checks shall be accepted for purchases made through the call center if the option is exercised. Money orders and travelers checks shall not be accepted for Internet purchases.